

REMARKS

A number of claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,366,950 issued to Scheussler et. al. (hereinafter referred to as *Scheussler*). *Scheussler* teaches at column 2, lines 18 – 23, “a system and a method of identifying computer users” that includes a client computer having an identification module that provides a unique identification number. In support of his rejection, the Examiner specifically refers to column 13, lines 35 – 47 that describes an electronic messaging system whereby a “USER-i” communicates with an internet service provider ISP-1 by sending an email. This communication requires that the email address of the ISP-1 be looked up by a server computer 26 that responds accordingly with the IP address of ISP-1 which is then used by the user-I to send the desired email message. In this way, all domains so described are real domains.

In contrast, claim 1 as originally filed teaches a method for **defining a virtual domain** in an electronic messaging system wherein the virtual domain corresponds to a real domain name server in a hierarchically organized directory. Furthermore, once so defined, various virtual domain attributes are assigned to the virtual domain node. At no point does *Scheussler* disclose or even remotely suggest defining a virtual domain let alone assigning specific virtual domain attributes to the virtual domain so defined. To reiterate, *Schuessler* always refers to real domains and never to virtual domains as required by the invention.

Therefore, the applicants believe that claim 1 is neither anticipated nor reasonably suggested by the cited reference and is, accordingly, allowable over the cited art.

Independent claims 14 and 18 recite substantially the same limitations as does claim 1 and therefore the Applicant contends that claims 14 and 18 are also allowable over the cited art for at least the reasons cited for independent claim 1.

All remaining dependent claims depend either directly or indirectly from independent claims 1, 14, or 18 and are therefore also allowable over the cited art for at least the reasons stated for claims 1, 14, or 18.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are allowable. Should the Examiner believe that a further telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,
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